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ABSTRACT

For the 1990s and beyond, backgrounds, experiences, needs of all people, along with the appropriate context will provide significant bases for transforming the curriculum. This paper contends that the paradigm for art in the elementary schools must include the interplay of this context with a commitment to "re-viewing" the foundations for and contemporary developments in the four constituent disciplines of art making, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. These four components of discipline-based art education (DBAE) will lead to more effective elementary-classroom teaching if students learn how to study and create art forms to be valued, in much the same way they should have value themselves for their independent form, for their membership in one of many histories of similar forms, and for their contribution to the multicultural intellectual history of a given period. Elementary teachers should enable students to establish the behavior and to develop the perceptual skills for learning to see visually and culturally. A 38-item bibliography is included. (Author/DB)

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Series No. 21

ART AND THE ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Linda O. Stanford

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Linda O. Stanford

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Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects

The Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects was awarded to Michigan State University in 1987 after a nationwide competition. Funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, the Elementary Subjects Center is a major project housed in the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT). The program focuses on conceptual understanding, higher order thinking, and problem solving in elementary school teaching of mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts. Center researchers are identifying exemplary curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in the teaching of these school subjects; studying these practices to build new hypotheses about how the effectiveness of elementary schools can be improved; testing these hypotheses through school-based research; and making specific recommendations for the improvement of school policies, instructional materials, assessment procedures, and teaching practices. Research questions include, What content should be taught when teaching for conceptual understanding and higher level learning? How do teachers concentrate their teaching to use their limited resources best? and In what ways is good teaching subject matter-specific?

The work is designed to unfold in three phases, beginning with literature review and interview studies designed to elicit and synthesize the points of view of various stakeholders (representatives of the underlying academic disciplines, intellectual leaders and organizations concerned with curriculum and instruction in school subjects, classroom teachers, state- and district-level policymakers) concerning ideal curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in these five content areas at the elementary level. Phase II involves interview and observation methods designed to describe current practice, and in particular, best practice as observed in the classrooms of teachers believed to be outstanding. Phase II also involves analysis of curricula (both widely used curriculum series and distinctive curricula developed with special emphasis on conceptual understanding and higher order applications), as another approach to gathering information about current practices. In Phase III, test models of ideal practice will be developed based on what has been learned and synthesized from the first two phases.

The findings of Center research are published by the IRT in the Elementary Subjects Center Series. Information about the Center is included in the IRT Communication Quarterly (a newsletter for practitioners) and in lists and catalogs of IRT publications. For more information, to receive a list or catalog, or to be placed on the IRT mailing list to receive the newsletter, please write to the Editor, Institute for Research on Teaching, 252 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1034.

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Abstract

For the 1990s and beyond, the backgrounds, experiences, and needs of all people, the context, will provide significant bases for the transformation of the curriculum. The paradigm for art in the elementary schools must include the interplay of this context with a commitment to "re-viewing" the foundations for and contemporary developments in its four constituent disciplines of art making, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. These four components of discipline-based art education (DBAE) will lead to more effective elementary-classroom teaching if students learn how to study and create art forms to be valued, in much the same way they should value themselves: for their independent form, for their membership in one of many histories of similar forms, and for their contribution to the multicultural intellectual history of a given period. Elementary teachers should enable students to establish the behavior and develop the perceptual skills for learning to see visually and culturally.

Preface

This is one of a series of eight reports being prepared for Study 2 of Phase I of the research agenda of the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. Phase I calls for surveying and synthesizing the opinions of various categories of experts concerning the nature of elementary-level instruction in mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts, with particular attention to how teaching for understanding and problem solving should be handled within such instruction. Michigan State University faculty who have made important contributions to their own disciplines were invited to become Board of Discipline members and to prepare papers describing historical developments and current thinking in their respective disciplines concerning what ought to be included in the elementary school curriculum. These papers include a sociohistorical analysis of how the discipline should be represented as an elementary school subject, what content should be taught, and the nature of the higher level thinking and problem solving outcomes that should be assessed. This paper focuses on the discipline of art; the other seven papers focus on the disciplines of mathematics, science, political science, geography, history, literature, and music.

ART AND THE ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Linda O. Stanford[1]

> "When you stand before an art class and introduce a lesson, hold a book in your hands. This gesture will enable you to make art seem important to the students."[2]

In the mid-1960s, college seniors in an art-education methods course heard a well-respected professor of art offer this gentle reminder with the hope that it would lend credibility to the discipline of art. What was the message those students received that day? Did they learn that the book, a centuries-old source for and symbol of knowledge, was being appropriated superficially from another discipline to strengthen the one they were studying? Did they view the text as a critically important purveyor of artistic accomplishment? Or, did they sense that the teacher's definition of art had become so narrow that the idea of introducing a textbook resource seemed alien? Whatever their response was, the debate regarding the precise nature of the discipline of art, and its role in the elementary classroom, continues.

Prologue

Twenty-five years ago, art educators intensively "reexamine[d] the academic status of art and [began] to view it as a body of knowledge that should be transmitted to children."[3] Now, among art educators there is no doubt that art should be part of the curriculum and the goal is to renew, purposefully, the definition of that discipline. Why is there an urgency now? Is there too

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[1] Linda O. Stanford, professor and associate chair, Department of Art, Michigan State University, is a member of the Board of Disciplines of the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. She extends special appreciation to James Snyder, Master of Fine Arts in Studio Art graduate student, for his able and insightful research contributions.

[2] Art Methods, Fall 1966, Course notes (Collection of the author).

[3] Laura H. Chapman, Approaches to Art in Education, New York, 1978, p. 17. See also: Arthur Efland, "Curriculum Antecedents of Discipline-based Art Education," Journal of Aesthetic Education, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Summer 1987), 59. In the nineteenth century, art had been taught as drawing and design in the schools for the middle class and the poor and for teacher training in response to industrial needs. In the 1930s, "'art in daily living'" was part of art appreciation, but "the activities often lacked a grounding in art as a systematic form of inquiry in its own right."

much inconsistency, too little variety, or are the "standards" upon which art teaching is predicated too weak? The pressing need to reassess art and its role in the elementary schools is integrally related to the cries of the last decade that we are experiencing a "declining state of culture" and are floating, directionless and distraught.[4]

This kind of pessimism, which longs in part for the "good old days," often leads to a yearning for established parameters and standards if only to assure that there is some stability. As an art historian, I am reminded of the writings of Clement Greenberg, the well-known modernist art critic who

> insist[ed] upon formalism as a way to preserve aesthetic values and therefore, some sense of culture, [at a time when he perceived] the deteriorating condition of Western society on the eve of World War II.[5]

Certainly, in recent years, this concern over the "loss" of culture has been exacerbated by the information explosion and the rapid change heralded even earlier, in the popular press, by such books as Future Shock.[6] Each day we are confronted with visual, written, or aural data which comes to us uncoded in terms of its importance. To maintain sanity, we selectively process some of it.

Within this processing lies the problem. How do we find the constants, the cultural lynchpins, for grappling with this exponential growth of available information? Or, how do we prove that constants and lynchpins are not needed? Information resources such as The List of Books guide those who want to be told what to read, and self-tests of accountability such as The

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[4] Howard Risatti, Postmodern Perspectives: Issues in Contemporary Art, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1990, p. 4. See also: "Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform," Washington, DC, 1983, passim.

[5] Risatti, p. 4.

[6] Alvin Toffler, Future Shock, New York, 1970, passim.

Dictionary of Cultural Literacy tell others what they need to know.[7] But, what happens when these guides do not work?--when the listings seem limited and limiting?

It is helpful to recall that we are participants in an interesting cultural moment--a time when the precepts of modernism are things "we draw upon, not . . . [things] we create. Modernism is our past not our future."[8] Its antihistoricism, its emphasis on self-referentiality without context, and its avant-garde elitism, among other traits, no longer seem viable in an era now known as postmodernist. "We are living now in a cultural age of diversity, eclecticism, and uncertainty of consciousness and goals, although skills and learning abound."[9] But, there is not a "clear attendant theory of culture or philosophy of humanity." Perhaps, as Cantor says, we need a "new paradigm and a new vision. . . ."[10]

For our purposes, if the modernist notion of focussing on the idea that an artwork is "external to history and irrelevant to considerations of temporality" is dead, what is its converse?[11] It is to consider the creation and study of art in a culturally pluralistic context. Overused though it may be, the word context is still most pertinent because it enables us to understand art-making in situ and then to define the complex relationship of this art to other cultural developments.[12] For

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[7] Frederic Raphael and Kenneth McLeish, The List of Books, New York, 1981, passim; E.D. Hirsch, Jr., Joseph F. Kett, and James Trefil, The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy, Boston, 1988, passim.

[8] Norman F. Cantor, Twentieth-Century Culture: Modernism to Deconstruction, New York, 1988, p. 401.

[9] Cantor, p. 9.

[10] Cantor, p. 391.

[11] Cantor, p. 30.

[12] The complexity of this relationship may be described as parasitic, commensal, or symbiotic.

education this lack of context has left the legacy of "the fragmented state of curricula."[13] The challenge now is to create curricula that move towards the creation of a new paradigm without attempting to encapsulate larger truths rigidly.[14] Instead, the leitmotif of this paradigm could be "a continuing re-viewing of the world, of the whole system, and of its components . . . the essence of the systems approach . . . [with its] confusion as well as enlightenment."[15]

Boyer and Cheney have written cogently regarding curricular fragmentation and have argued for a linkage of these fragments.[16] Their interpretations are correct as long as the curricular fragments may overlap, interweave, and assume new positions without becoming completely circumscribed. What matters most is the ongoing process of approaching a "balance . . . between individual interests and shared concerns . . . [so that] a strong learning community will result."[17] If we agree with Boyer, this community should extend beyond the curriculum to the whole educational experience and should be replete with "intellectual purposefulness," "justice," "discipline," "honesty," and "caring."[18] It may serve as the basis of the paradigm for which Cantor pleas, a paradigm that remains flexibly amorphous as it considers:

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[13] Lynne V. Cheney, 50 Hours: A Core Curriculum for College Students, Washington, DC, 1989, p. 7. Cheney labels today's curricula as fragmented but she does not link this fragmentation with modernism; that association is mine. Cheney's focus is on the undergraduate curriculum but her ideas also apply to elementary and secondary programs. See also: Ernest L. Boyer, "College--The Undergraduate Experience in America," The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching: News," November 2, 1986, passim.

[14] Cantor, p. 36. To "encapsulate" larger truths, the Victorian focussed on a universalist perspective and the modernist focussed on the minute particle. Perhaps, Cantor would agree with Boyer's contention that the fragmentation of traditional disciplines is a useful example here. Can it be said that there is an inverse relationship between the amount of specialization of a discipline and the amount of profound truthfulness the scholar discovers?

[15] C. West Churchman, The Systems Approach, New York, 1968, pp. 230, 231.

[16] See note 12.

[17] Boyer, first section, p. 9.

[18] Ernest L. Boyer, "The Search of Community," An Address, January 18, 1990.

context
and
re-viewing.

These five descriptors of the community provide essential and inspiring paradigmatic substance although they carry the potential for both ambiguity and liberation. Boyer intends for these words to lay initial groundwork. It is for others to address issues and trends specifically in a move towards an expanded commitment of ownership and participation in the educational process.

For example, we know that our demographic composition is changing rapidly and is becoming increasingly diverse.

> We are seeing the emergence of another "one-third of a nation" blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asian Americans who constitute our minority population. . . . By the year 2000, almost 42 percent of all public school students will be minority children or other children in poverty.[19]

For the 1990s and beyond, the backgrounds, experiences, and needs of all people, the context, will provide significant bases for the transformation of the curriculum. For those who are worried that we are too diverse and do not possess sufficient "shared values" it is wise to remember that it is always easier to perceive shared values in the minds of groups of people when time has passed and blurred our memories of those distinctive voices we choose not to recall. Isn't one of the responsibilities of the school system, beginning with the elementary grades, to highlight and explore, as an ongoing event, both shared and distinctive values and to have all students continually "re-view" and learn both?

Transition to the Elementary-Art Classroom

If two essential issues confronting education today are the need to transform the curriculum and to provide teaching environments or communities where everyone is challenged to re-think

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[19] "One-Third of a Nation," A Report of the Commission of Minority Participation in Education and American Life, Washington, DC, 1988, p. 2.

his/her place in society, what is the relationship between these issues and the current debate concerning the nature of the discipline of art? As art educators begin to teach with this vast societal picture in mind, there are several sequential questions they may want to ask during the 1990s. Addressing these questions may help the art educator respond and contribute to

- The general state of education today
- The intellectual, cultural, and social implications of diversity
- Curricular developments such as the much debated topic of discipline-based art education
- And the range of art forms and art mediums relevant for classroom exploration

These questions will serve here as the framework for my assessment of the viewpoints expressed by those who teach art in our elementary schools and for a further look at the two issues of context and re-viewing.

> What is art and what is art education?
> Are they one and the same discipline or are they different?
> Should we care?
>
> What is the relationship of this discipline(s) to the elementary-school subject of art?
>
> What constitutes the most worthwhile content for inclusion in the elementary-art curriculum?
> What do students need to know about art?
> What can students learn from art that will be useful and relevant in later life?
>
> From the perspective of a non-art educator, can it be said that most art educators are progressing towards the formulation of answers to the above questions concerning the discipline and the elementary-school subject of art?

1. <u>What is art and what is art education? Are they one and the same discipline or are they different? Should we care?</u>

Thus far, I have spoken of "art" and have referred to the professionals known as "art educators." Is the discipline art educators care about art or is it art education? If we speak of the discipline of art and the discipline of art education are they two mutually exclusive entities? These questions are worthy of debate because they impact directly on what professionals think should be and will be taught in the schools. If a discipline is a "structure . . . of knowledge" and a "professional

field . . . of intellectual inquiry," to paraphrase Bruner's remarks from decades ago, that is easy enough to comprehend.[20] But, when we ask what is the relationship of the discipline of art, a "structure of knowledge," to the elementary-school subject of art the problem becomes clear: the scope of the definition of art is directly related to the nature of what is taught. Whether

art is studio art
craft
art criticism
art history
aesthetics
theory

or any or all of the above, it is usually believed that art education includes some or all of these components infused with the history, theories, and methodologies germane to a pedagogical commitment to educate and enlighten others.

Here is a critically important issue. If art is largely a creative act, or at least an act of making, then the favored definition for art will be:

art is studio art

And, the favored definition for art education will be:

art education is studio art
pedagogical history
pedagogical theories
and
pedagogical methodologies

If craft activities are included that are essentially prescriptive and diagrammatic, then the favored definition for art will be:

art is studio art
and
crafts

and, the favored definition for art education will be:

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[20] Arthur D. Efland, "Studies in Art Education: Fourth Invited Lecture. How Art Became a Discipline: Looking at Our Recent History," Studies in Art Education, 29, No. 3 (1988), 262. The first quotation is found here. Efland, "Curriculum," p. 62. The second quotation is found here.

art education is studio art
crafts
pedagogical history
pedagogical theories
and
pedagogical methodologies

The pattern may be continued by selecting components from a definition of art and integrating them with pedagogical history, theories, and methodologies. The disciplines of art and art education are distinct "structures" although they share constituent components. Art educators teach art in view of the social, psychological, and aesthetic foundations for the history, theories, and methodologies they use.

There is no reason to favor art over art education or vice versa because they are inexorably interrelated. It is nevertheless interesting to observe that art professionals have questioned the nature of the linkages among the art makers, historians, and educators. This kind of questioning is sound. It allows for a renewed commitment to study, analysis, and intellectual growth and for improved classroom experiences while it also acknowledges the roles of art professionals.

2. What is the relationship of this discipline(s) to the elementary-school subject of art?

It can be assumed that one discipline, art education, is being discussed for inclusion in the elementary curriculum under the rubric "art" because art education includes some of the aforementioned "components" of art and the interrelated commitment to broadening and enhancing students' understanding of and responses to the visual arts.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the heated debates today do not center on distinguishing art from art education but on determining the amount of weight, if any, that will be given to particular "components" of art. In art education, one argument, originally championed in the 1950s, was for pure self-expression with "each child . . . viewed as equal to all others."[21] But, there was a

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[21] Kerry Freedman, "Art Education and Changing Political Agendas: An Analysis of Curriculum Concern of the 1940's and 1950's," Studies in Art Education, 29, No. 1 (1987), 23-24.

caveat: "by focusing on the personal, curriculum denied the importance of culture and politics. The contexts of time and place, of history and community, were lost."[22] Elementary-school art became studio art; an exclusive definition of studio art was selected.

At the other end of the spectrum (no art pun, intended) is the view of art education espoused by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts and known today as discipline-based art education (DBAE). In "Beyond Creating . . . ," the 1985 report by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, the emphasis shifted from a predominant focus on creative endeavors, hence the title "Beyond Creating," to "include attention to the disciplines that contribute to understanding art: art production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics."[23] Elementary-school art is art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. An inclusive definition of art is used. This development remains bothersome to many art educators. But, to others, the change represented by the Getty view is a welcome sign that the cultural contributions of art through the ages are being recognized in elementary-school art classes. This is certainly a fine aspiration. We know that rare students will become the creative geniuses of their century--the Michelangelos or the Georgia O'Keeffes.

There are serious complications in the Getty language. For example, the term art production suggests, to some, a lack of interest in individual creativity. This is not actually true although the term does de-romanticize the act of creating. At this juncture, it seems important to note that in actual practice the distance between the DBAE classroom and others may not be so great. Few teachers focus solely on cathartic outpouring and few eliminate creative opportunities when discussing art history, criticism, or aesthetics. They allow selected earlier developments in

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[22] Freedman, pp. 26-27.

[23] "Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in America's Schools," A Report by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, Los Angeles, 1985, Preface, n.p.

art education such as aesthetic education to inform their pedagogical decisions. Interestingly, these developments also serve as the precursors for DBAE which the Getty Center has promulgated.[24]

It is neither necessary nor productive to make a choice between creativity and serendipity or history and aesthetics. What is needed, as Boyer notes, is a balance between individual and shared values that, in the case of art education, are to be developed, exposed, and realized through art making, art viewing, and historical and critical study. Efland concurs:

> Discipline-based curricula can be addressed to quite different goals, as the goal variation in the antecedent programs has indicated. Because art itself is diverse and is filled with contradictory conceptions of its social and aesthetic value, discipline-based curricula should honor this diversity by the intentional pursuit of various goals.[25]

3. What institutes the most worthwhile content for inclusion in the elementary-art curriculum? What do students need to know about art? What can students learn from art that will be useful and relevant in later life?

The 1988 National Endowment for the Arts report, "Toward Civilization," notes that:

> there is little agreement about the content of arts education: what should be required, what should be taught separately, what should be integrated into the teaching of other subjects. Nor is there any consensus in arts education about the relative emphasis that should be placed on teaching history, skills, and critical judgment. . . . There is a consensus that the arts should be taught sequentially, and certain professional associations of arts educators have agreed on comprehensive curricula for their disciplines.[26]

A year later, the National Art Education Association (NAEA) "recognize[d] the leadership role the

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[24] W. Dwaine Greer, "Discipline-Based Art Education: Approaching Art as a Subject of Study," Studies in Art Education, 25, No. 4 (1984), 212. Greer is credited with being the first art educator to use the term "discipline-based art education." He used it in this 1984 article. At this time, Greer was serving as director of the Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts of the J. Paul Getty Trust, Center for Education in the Arts.

[25] Efland, "Curriculum," p. 89.

[26] "Toward Civilization," A Report on Arts Education, Washington, DC, 1988, p. 25.

National Endowment for the Arts had taken to 'make the case for arts education'" in this report.[27] However, the NAEA Board of Directors expressed concern regarding the NEA's subsequent pursuit of

> any "fail-safe" arts course or prototype curriculum . . . that includes all the arts. . . . Our purpose is "to promote and maintain the highest possible degree of quality instruction in visual arts programs." . . . This is quite different than a year's survey of "the arts" that teaches nothing in-depth. . . . The kind of "fail-safe" one-year arts course described by the NEA cannot meet the rigorous standards of a quality and "sequential program of art instruction that integrates the study of aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production conducted by teachers certified in art" as described in the NAEA "Purpose" and "Goals."[28]

Here the NAEA debates whether the effort to improve arts education by endorsing the concept of one "interrelated arts" course will undermine the uniqueness, of several disciplines in the arts: visual art, music, theatre and dance. Certainly, the cultural and stylistic interconnections of two or more disciplines in the arts and in other curricular areas are worth studying but only if one discipline and its "objectives" are not "submerged" in the other. It is often too easy for the identity of "visual" art to be lost if "the applause . . . [is] for the subject area as originating the idea."[29] A delicate balance is required because the integration of human experiences, as Freyberger notes, is nevertheless more valuable to the learner than rigidly segmented subjects. Integration can encourage contextual connections as well as effective discipline-based learning. Art educators have been returning to this integrative approach throughout the 1980s.

Although both the NEA and the NAEA statements tend to focus on secondary education, it is apparent that their overall positions apply to the elementary curriculum as well. Interestingly, the

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[27] "A Fail-Safe Arts Course, A National Curriculum and the National Endowment for the Arts," A Statement by the National Art Education Association Board of Directors, Reston, VA, 1989, p. 2.

[28] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[29] Ruth M. Freyberger, "Integration: Friend or Foe of Art Education," Art Education, 38, No. 6 (November 1985), 9.

NAEA calls for instruction in art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics thereby indicating its endorsement of DBAE and its role in general education. In response to the NEA, the NAEA agrees with the concept of sequential learning and, by its very mentioning of art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics, it supports the NEA's call for "history, skills, and critical judgment" to be taught. The NAEA does not endorse the NEA's disciplinary designation of design, architecture, and the media arts as "distinct arts areas." This kind of designation, according to the NAEA, will cause problems for school boards and state laws because these three content areas are already included in "the visual arts domain."[30]

The NAEA wants art professionals to maintain authority and influence over the nature of the subject of art as it is taught in the schools. If rigid designations of design, architecture, and the media arts are maintained, what will happen to painting, sculpture, and printmaking? If the designation of art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics serve as constants and if their interplay is to occur, then the subdisciplines of design, architecture, media arts, painting, and others need to be flexibly joined with these four disciplines. Otherwise, there is a risk that these subdisciplines may only cohere with one of the four.

The NAEA rightfully wants the visual arts to be prominent. It is not assuming a defensive, self-protective stance or serving as the isolationist standard bearer. The NAEA is pleading for the rights of committed art educators to teach visual art, in its broadest sense, with a concern for concepts as well as skills and techniques. Therefore, it seems wiser to describe the large disciplines of art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics than to highlight a few sub-disciplines, which lessens the possibility of including other subdisciplines that are equally important and timely.

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30 "A Fail-Safe," p. 4.

The problem faced by the NEA as it calls for a more focussed content base for the schools is that the arts, as Barkan said years ago, are not the same structurally as, for example, the sciences.

> Does the absence of a formal structure of interrelated theorems, couched in a universal symbol system as in science, mean that the branch of the humanities called the arts are not disciplines, and that artistic inquiries are not disciplines? I think the answer is that the disciplines of art are of a different order. Though they are analogical and metaphorical, and they do not grow out of or contribute to a formal structure of knowledge artistic inquiry is not loose.[31]

Barkan's analysis underpins the notion of a disciplinary paradigm that, in its quest to comprehend changing analogical and metaphorical meanings, uses the processes of creative and critical inquiry to "re-view": to explore and critique rather than merely transmit.[32] And, as if to agree with Barkan, "in a broadly conceived effort, Clark and Zimmerman proposed a model for visual arts education based on four professional roles: artist, art critic, art historian, and aesthetician."[33] These role models relate directly to the four subject areas of DBAE.

The significance of these role models for the elementary-art classroom is considerable. There is not only a

> willingness to accommodate the diverse forms of others, [but] there's an invitation and challenge for each person to generate their own ideas and images . . . [honoring] the nature of artistic processes and the rich stylistic diversity that should characterize learning outcomes.[34]

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[31] Efland, p. 65. Efland is quoting Barkan.

[32] "Text of 'Speaking for the Humanities,' A Report from the American Council of Learned Societies," The Chronicle of Higher Education, XXXV, No. 18 (January 11, 1989), A12.

[33] Kenneth R. Beittel, "Art Education," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Volume I, Fifth edition, New York, 1982, p. 162.

[34] Jerome L. Hausman, "Back to the Future: Reflections on Present-day Emphases in Curriculum and Evaluation," Art Education, 40, No. 2 (March 1988), 41.

In response to present-day worrisome efforts to make information and knowledge more fixed and to "measure outcomes," Hausman continues,

> Our curricula should grow from the deep personal professional convictions of teachers, from the interests and needs of students as well as traditions of art. Our activities should stem from a clear sense for artistic as well as scholarly process. Our approaches for evaluating outcomes should look to forms and means that are natural and direct consequences of teaching--through the utilization of portfolios, diaries, sketchbooks, exchanges with artists, and responses to works of art.[35]

This viewpoint focusses on the uniqueness of art and the involvement of the individual. To some, this lessens art's "educational legitimacy" which is only restored when it is presented as "structured matter."[36] Hausman would disapprove of this push for structure but staunch supporters of DBAE would approve. So, it seems that both Hausman and DBAE supporters agree that the role model of the art professional is important. However, they disagree regarding the methods used to improve the quality of teaching in the discipline and regarding the importance of improving the stature of the discipline for the eyes of those who favor fostering a similarity to other fields of study.

If the paradigm used here encourages the investigation of context and "re-viewing," it may, in fact, clash with a rigid interpretation of what DBAE is. It seems as though DBAE, in its call for sequential learning may also be subscribing "to the positivist ideal of objectivity and disinterest."[37] If this is accurate, it should be remembered, "that traditional claims to disinterest, . . . reflec[t] unacknowledged idealogies."[38] It is problematic to overstate the similarities between the cultural

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[35] Ibid., pp. 38-39.

[36] Karen A. Hamblen, "The Issue of Technocratic Rationality in Discipline-Based Art Education," Studies in Art Education, 27, No. 1 (1985), 44.

[37] "Text of 'Speaking,'" p. A14.

[38] Ibid.

value of science vis-à-vis art. The DBAE dedication to general education is crucially important but the analogy to objectivity is not.

> Prescribing one rubric for the arts in general schooling has a parallel. As science education encompasses those several disciplines that systematize our knowledge about facts in the physical world, so the arts, when taught as interconnected disciplines, can bring about a coherent understanding of the diverse expressive forms that delineate imagination.[39]

In this passage, Greer assumes that a primary goal is the systemization of knowledge. It can be argued that all knowledge is not systematic (remember Barkan) and that there is not a finite way to "delineate" imagination.

This means we need to eschew stereotypical notions of art and science and to cull from the past and the present what is useful and relevant for today and for the future. As an example, listen to Paul Strand, the well-known twentieth-century photographer, who is quoted in "Beyond Creating":

> "The true artist, like the true scientist, is a researcher . . . ; and what he creates, or better perhaps, brings back, are the objective results of his explorations. The measure of his talent, of his genius, . . . , is the richness he finds in such a life's voyage of discovery."[40]

For the elementary-art classroom, we can and should borrow Strand's call for discovery without reinforcing the notion of the male artist as genius and as the creator of masterpieces. Instead, we should foster the kind of discovery that allows for "both cognitive understanding of artistic form and consciousness of the visual forms of feeling that inhere in it."[41] This can be accomplished with an unconstrained approach to art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics.

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[39] Greer, p. 218.

[40] Beyond, p. 15.

[41] Charles M. Dorn, "An Integrative Model for Art Curriculum Conception," Design for Arts in Education, 87 (March-April 1986), 10.

The elementary-art curriculum, like postmodernism, should be purposefully discursive. A commitment to open-ended discourse should guide the teacher who builds and draws from the curriculum; the critical, aesthetic and historical analyses that are integral to class discussions of visual forms; the involvement of the individual with art materials and problem-solving experiences; and the contribution of the individual to the learning community. This discourse can occur frequently if the emphasis is on the active learning that has usually characterized the art classroom. If this active learning continues, a meaningful kind of sequential learning will be possible and effective. If the sequential learning is a passive experience that eviscerates the vitality of the visual arts, art educators will find themselves in a place apart from the forefront of education today.

Learning communities, active learning, and collaborative settings are "buzz" words because they are important for their ability to speak to the need to engage the student.[42] Other buzz words and methods discussed at education conferences and mentioned earlier by Hausman include the use of "portfolios" and "sketchbooks" to encourage ongoing and developmental learning and to provide a foundation for useful evaluations.[43] Ironically, other disciplines outside the arts are looking at these techniques, used often in art, as ways to involve students more intensely and to give them a true sense of participation. Simultaneously, and even more ironically, we hear the Getty Center, the NEA, and the NAEA endorsing a kind of sequential learning that may be inherently passive!

Art educators need to maintain their convictions regarding those pedagogical methods that serve the discipline of art and its students most effectively. They must also allow room for behavioral change, among themselves and their students, because the content of art which is

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[42] For example, at "Today's Choices . . . Tomorrow's Faculty," the 1990 National Conference on Higher Education of the American Association for Higher Education, April 1-4, 1990, San Francisco, CA, there were two workshops respectively entitled "Designing Intellectual Experiences for Students in Collaborative Settings" by Jean MacGregor and Karl Smith and "Learning Communities: Creating Connections Among Faculty, Students, and the Disciplines" by Faith Gabelnick and Roberta S. Matthews.

[43] See notes 34 and 41.

always changing requires such adaptability. In deciding what to teach in the elementary school, art educators should acknowledge, and some have already done so, that major demographic shifts and intellectual developments of the last thirty years have rightfully impacted on the kinds of works of art and the artists whom we should choose: to study, to reproduce photographically in texts and visual media, and to teach. The growth of diverse minority populations have brought different cultural traditions and ways of viewing the world into the classroom. The intellectual outgrowths of semiotics, structuralism, and deconstructionism have stimulated a reassessment of the language we use to talk about art and the traditional contexts in which we view and explore art's meaning. Once the liberating potential of these developments is realized, teachers should feel a true sense of freedom from conventionalism which they may impart to their students.

What should elementary students learn?

> The new discipline-based arts curriculum will stress an understanding of perception as active dialogue between qualities in the environment and an individual's cognitive frame of reference.[44]

It should "prepar[e] students to intelligently engage wider issues."[45] And what are those wider issues? They are the need to study art in a multicultural context, in a world that includes the well-known and the little-known, the elite and the vernacular. This learning can be accomplished by including course content that enables students to study art:

> in different ways:
>
> [1] as an independent form structured according to its own laws and systems of relationships,
> [2] as a form belonging to a history of similar forms, or
> [3] as a form belonging to the intellectual history of a given period.[46]

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[44] Margaret DiBlasio, "Escaping Narrowness: Broader Visions for Arts Curricula," Design for Arts in Education, 86 (May-June 1985), 30.

[45] Howard Risatti, "A Failing Curricula," New Art Examiner, Vol. 17, No. 1 (September 1989), 26.

[46] Patrizia Lombardo. "Architecture as an Object of Thought," Marco Diani and Catherine Ingraham, eds., Restructuring Architectural Theory, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1989, p. 80.

Any of these three approaches may be overlapped and integrated at any time. None is sufficient by itself yet each can be a part of any elementary-grade level and may include art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. In all successful teaching, it is the teacher's responsibility to ascertain the level at which a subject should be approached. I am assuming that almost any subject may be introduced at any age and that active learning, in individual and group projects, will be integral to any art classroom.

For example, the first approach lends itself to the investigation of formal properties (the nature of the visual elements that comprise an artwork) and their aesthetic impact. Five-year olds can discern different kinds of lines, shapes, textures, sizes, two-or-three-dimensionality et cetera and can tell you how they respond to them. This approach also provides a means to discuss art (and architectural) theory and art history as well as to create. For example, using the architectural theory "form follows function" you could ask "What do these words mean? What did the architect Louis Sullivan tell us about buildings when he made this statement? Does it apply to any other objects in the world? Can you create something that has a form (overall arrangement of art elements), a design, that tells you something about what its use is?

The second approach is useful for developing perceptual skills regarding the elements of art, symbols, themes, and moods. A range of images could be shown and students could mentally trace their emergence. If you want to talk about geometric forms you could show an Amish quilt, a Mayan temple, a Renaissance drawing, a Cubist-inspired collage by the black artist Romare Bearden, and a 1960s International Style office building in your neighborhood (this style is common everywhere). Noting bare similarities or discussing more subtle influences will depend on interest and class level.

The third approach is potentially the most intellectually rewarding because it allows teachers to ask and to encourage students to ask the "why" questions. Why do some artists work realistically, abstractly, and/or expressionistically? Why did the Aboriginal artists of Australia

paint on bark? What do they want to tell us about time and dreams? Why did Charles Sheeler paint his buildings of the 1920s and 1930s with such crisp edges and precise forms? What kind of world does he show us? Why does Jenny Holzer make neon art? Will it still be around many years from now? Would you like it better if her art were in a museum rather than on a building? With this approach, creative, historical, critical, and aesthetic experiences may be integrated.

These three approaches to studying art are the beginning. Actually, they do not represent new ideas. Art educators have been employing some or all of them for years. Even the introduction of world cultures, very contemporary art, or local art/architecture is not new. But it is essential if the art-classroom experience is to be the multicultural learning arena that it should be. It is dismaying how often the "canon" of a white male Western world is the favored subject matter for art classes. In a recent article, Smith offers a "Modest Proposal" for developing the art curriculum using DBAE or other innovative approaches. His pragmatism is most welcome but of the twenty-one examples including thirteen artists and eight styles or traditions he chose to cite, none of the artists are female and only one tradition is non-Western (Japanese prints). The inclusion of a folk-art tradition (Pennsylvania Dutch) is admirable but generally his examples, while they are fine choices, are too skewed towards one cultural experience. He says his "whole program aims at the reasonable and attainable" and that is commendable.[47] But, the examples have to come from more diverse sources.

Teachers should draw on their own knowledge of famous or significant works of art and then add other nonfamous works they and their students know, like, and wonder about. Sources for names of artists and movements include art-history texts and journals. Other good sources are the weekly art and design sections in newspapers and news magazines. These periodicals will tell you who is "hot" and who is "not" and, because of their accessibility, the teacher and the students can respond to these assessments and form their own. Teachers can also peruse anthologies of

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[47] Peter Smith, "A Modest Proposal, or Using Ingredients at Hand to Make an Art Curriculum," Art Education, Vol, 42, No. 6 (November 1989), 10-11.

writings by artists; these works are often very revealing. And, finally teachers can look to the local community for traditional and nontraditional artist role models and actual art objects.

The definition of what an art object is has to be kept broad to include not only paintings, but street murals, sculptures and neon art, timeless stone structures, and the house down the street. The power of the media and the pervasiveness of computer "art" should be explored to understand the processes of visual communication and their influences. The fleeting nature of the electronic image encourages the investigation of many questions such as: "Does art has to be old to be important?" and "Do I have to create a final 'product' by the end of my experience with clay?"

Judgments and values are being called for. Is it the role of the art teacher to explore these issues?

> Are values merely deposited [underlining is mine] in students, or are they broken open for careful study? Are students taught only to accommodate themselves to a world, or are they helped to formulate their own understanding of what the world might be, and how the world might be changed? Does art education exist to reproduce existing society or to produce new social experience? . . . Art education . . . can help create the means to analyze beliefs . . . [that is, to re-view]. The creative act and the critical act need not be two separate moments; indeed, it is in their intersection that possibilities for new experience can be found.[48]

This is what our teachers need to foster and this is what our students need to know how to do if art is to be a meaningful part of general education.

Students must study and create art forms to be valued, in much the same way they should value themselves--for their independent form, for their membership in one of many histories of similar forms, and for their contribution to the multicultural intellectual history of a given period. When students can do this, they will be empowered with perceptual skills to understand the world visually and culturally and to make important visual decisions in an age of information. They will

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[48] Richard Bolton, "The Banking Concept of Art Education," New Art Examiner, Vol. 17, No. 1 (September 1989), 32. The author suggests that "there is no such thing as value-free teaching, or a pedagogical approach free of politics." I would agree.

know that art is found in every community, not just in Europe, and that people make different kinds of art to convey important messages to us all.

The responsibility for the elementary-art teacher is to enable students to establish the behavior for learning to see visually and culturally and for understanding the impact of a visual process or a cultural context on the meanings we glean from an artwork.

Interestingly, the guidelines of the American Council of Learned Societies elaborate what these behaviors should be.

> [C]ontinue to teach the great [art] works of the traditional canon in relation to historical scholarship and critical theory. . . .
> [E]xperiments with the canon should be the norm, not the exception, and texts [and artworks] representing traditionally marginal voices or other national contexts should always be taught, and for these reasons:
>
> first, because our students are not themselves drawn from a single homogeneous culture;
>
> second, because the nation is increasingly involved in cultural and business exchanges with other nations;
>
> third, because one of the humanities' most fundamental responsibilities is to expose and question the aesthetic, moral, cultural, and epistemological assumptions which govern our behavior and our society.[49]

4. From the perspective of a non-art educator, can it be said that most art educators are progressing towards the formulation of answers to the above questions concerning the discipline and the elementary-school subject of art?

Yes, wholeheartedly, I believe that art educators are developing their own answers to these and other important educational questions. The healthy debate, evidenced in journal articles and professional papers, reaffirms the commitment of art educators to directing the changes in their discipline. I would, however, caution against tightly defined attempts to apply the definition of sequential learning, as it is known in the sciences, to art.

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[49] "Text of 'Speaking,'" p. A22.

Instead, selectively borrow methodologies that may make the creative, historical, critical, and aesthetic aspects of visual art more accessible without draining their lifeblood.[50]

Continue to exploit the active learning potential of art classes beginning with the human ability to use our eyes to see art without a priori information.

Revel in the freedom a multidisciplinary approach such as DBAE has to offer. Manipulate its components to encourage integrative and contextual learning. Consider the more interesting recent curricular suggestions such as the call for "perspective," for responsiveness to "the many ways individuals know and write about art," and for less emphasis on "commodity."[51]

Allow art making to span from the creation of a finite object to a momentary experience, from individual to group experiences, and from one skill level to another as needed.

Remember that the meaning of a work of art is open-ended. It changes over time and we are part of that change. Comprehend new associations by comparing and contrasting them with known understandings from the past. Use an aesthetic or critical theory as a starting point.

Select art examples from the school and community so students learn that art, including design and architecture, is all around them. New or old, it is the proximity that matters--the context. Decades ago, Chapman and others devoted chapters to environment design.[52] In recent years there has been a renewed interest in design and architectural education that can inform us about the contextual relationships of design, heritage, planning, and visual decision making; this interest can interface well with DBAE or other integrative approaches.[53]

Do not worry about the subordination of art making to history, criticism, and aesthetics. "[S]eek [the] fusion [of art history, art criticism, and aesthetics] into the thought processes involved in the creation of and response to aesthetic form." But, go beyond Dorn's quotation and his concern that these disciplines should "only [be studied] as they impact on

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[50] Anthony Swider, "Scheduling the Four Components at the Elementary School Level," NAEA Advisory, Fall 1989, flyer, p.1. Swider offers a three-day format to enable an art teacher to include art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics in the one art class-per-week format. My only concern is that his approach might become too rigid.

[51] Karen Hamblen, "An Elaboration on Meanings and Motives," Art Education, Vol. 42, No. 4 (July 1989),7; Kenneth Marantz, "Editorial. 'Art as Commodity: the Impoverishment of Art Education.'" Studies in Art Education, Vol. 30, Issue 3 (Spring 1989), passim; F. Graeme Chalmers, "Beyond Current Conceptions of Discipline-Based Art Education," Art Education, Vol. 40, No. 5 (September 1987), 58.

[52] Chapman, pp. 325-347.

[53] Heta Kauppinen, "Architecture as Design Study," Art Education, Vol.42, No. 5 (September 1989), 46-52; David Weitzman, "What Schools Don't Teach," Historic Preservation, 40, No. 5 (September-October 1988), 58-63.

the intuitive process of artistic thinking and forming."[54] Recognize that a more discursive interplay of the four disciplines will enrich elementary art the most.

Know that visual images speak to all of us just as nature itself does. The journey to learn what these images say to each of us, from different cultural backgrounds, is the exciting part. Artists rarely pretend to have all the answers. Use them as role models. They, like us, are explorers of a new technological frontier and an unfolding culture.

These are some guidelines for the elementary-art experience that seem important. Many of them are considered by art educators everyday. I offer them from the perspective of an art historian and with the full realization that Efland and Chapman have the final word. Efland reminds us that although

> it is important to consult with representatives of the disciplines on educational matters, we should bear in mind Chapman's admonition that those who originate and work with discipline-based concepts are not always competent to judge their pedagogical power.[55]

That remains the responsibility and the reward of the art educators in the classrooms.

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[54] Dorn, p. 10.

[55] Efland, p. 90.

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